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Another Try

First impressions of the man nominated by President Jimmy Carter to head the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) are positive.

Admiral Stansfield Turner seems to be a capable person whose interests and skills extend far beyond his military duties. More should be known about Admiral Stansfield when the Senate completes what can be expected to be an exhaustive inquiry into his background and qualifications.

No doubt, President Carter was particularly careful in his choice of Admiral Turner. Mr. Carter's first selection for the CIA directorship, Theodore Sorenson, withdrew his name from consideration when controversy developed over his past use of CIA documents and his liberal ideology.

Nothing has come to public attention which suggests Admiral Turner faces difficulty in winning confirmation by the Senate. Nonetheless, the law-

makers should address themselves to the question of whether a military man should head the CIA.

In the past, five of the 11 men who directed the sensitive CIA had previous careers as high ranking, professional military officers. So the precedent exists for tapping men from the armed services to fill the sensitive post.

But the events of the Watergate years have shown that the CIA needs strong civilian leadership beholden to no branch of government.

At this point it would be wrong to suddenly rule out Admiral Turner because of his military position. That would be unfair to Mr. Carter and his nominee.

The issue, however, should be raised with the goal of bringing about complete civilian control of the CIA in future years.